

# *In Focus*

Summer 2011

**News from the MCB Braille and  
Talking Book Library (BTBL)**



## **BARD: Library of the Future**

If the word “bard” brings to mind a Shakespearean minstrel, then it’s time you learned a new definition. BARD is the acronym used by the National Library Service for the Braille and Audio Reading Download program. Anyone who is getting Talking Books through the mail can also sign up for BARD, download books to a computer, save them to a thumb drive, and use the digital machine to play the book. Currently BARD provides access to audio books, while Web Braille is the point of access for downloadable Braille. Both media will be located on BARD in the near future. To use BARD, you need a high-speed internet connection, an e-mail address, and at least some computer navigation skill.

There are many advantages to downloading books. First, new books are posted on BARD weeks before they arrive on cartridge in Lansing, and there’s no waiting on a reserve list for a book to be returned to the library before it can be sent to you. It’s there for the taking whenever you want, 24/7. Second, there are no due dates. Better yet, you never return a book you’ve downloaded. It’s yours to keep. Third, NLS magazines are available in digital format on BARD. Magazines are not yet available on digital media for shipment through the mail. Visit this site to sign up for BARD. You’ll be glad you did! <https://nlsbard.loc.gov/MI1A/ApplicationInstructions.html>

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# Technology Corner

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## **Computer Club Schedule**

- Aug. 13: Online stock trading through Scottrade, by Greg Sprout and Scott Norris.
- Sept. 10: Bookshare downloadable books, by Scott Norris. How to sign up for an account, search for books, and download them. Scott will demonstrate several digital players that play Bookshare books.
- Oct. 8: Spruce up your presentation skills using PowerPoint, by Scott Norris. Learn how to create slides, add pictures, add sounds, and run your PowerPoint slide show.
- Nov. 12: Who's Calling? How smart are those smart cell phones? Panel discussion to be moderated by Scott Norris. Panel includes Matt McCubbin and J.J. Meddaugh, both of AT Guys and [www.blindbargains.com](http://www.blindbargains.com); Steve Pollo, technology trainer; and Al Puzzuoli of MSU Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities.

## **Book Club Schedule**

- Sept. 10: *Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close* by Jonathan Foer, DB60319. Precocious nine-year-old Oskar Schell discovers a mysterious key labeled "Black" belonging to his father, who was killed in the September 11, 2001, World Trade Center attacks. Oskar roams New York City on a quest to find the matching lock. Some strong language. Bestseller, 2005.

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# iPad with VoiceOver

By Meagan Daniels, Library Intern

At BTBL's Libraries Without Walls conference in June, I attended a workshop presented by Scott Ford on Apple's iOS products. iPad, a tablet with a 10 by 7 inch touch screen that is about a quarter inch thick, has several very exciting features including searching for apps and for music. When connected to the internet, the iPad can pick up radio stations from around the world. Using the Dropbox app, a teacher can share an assignment with a student, who can then do the work and submit the assignment via the same interface. iPad also has game applications.

The really amazing thing is that the iPad and all other devices running Apple's iOS software are accessible. The iPad, the iPhone (a smart phone and so much more), the iPod touch (an mp3 player), as well as all Macintosh computers, come with a built-in screen reader called VoiceOver. This means that you can purchase any of these devices, take it home, plug it in, activate VoiceOver, and use it without the need to purchase additional screen reading software. Additionally, these devices come equipped with Zoom, a screen enlargement program.

When connecting any of these devices to a computer, a blind user can move things from the computer to the device independently. I really love that! When it's time to update your product, all you do is download the update and install it. No installation of new screen-reading software is needed. The only learning curve is getting used to operating with a touch screen. If you don't like the touch screen, you can connect a wireless keyboard. Just be aware that Apple keyboard commands are different from Windows commands, and there will be a learning curve if you go this route.

I just got an iPhone a few months ago. It is my first completely accessible cell phone, and I love having that personal independence. I'm looking into the MacBook Pro laptop as my next purchase.

# Intern Interviews

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Two individuals have been working at BTBL over the past two years under the Michigan Commission for the Blind's Internship Program. As was expected, this federal "stimulus" funded program comes to an end on September 30, 2011. Both interns have developed excellent work skills and are ready to compete in the marketplace for full-time positions. Many of our patrons have personally benefited from their eagerness to assist over the phone.

## **Trendell Gobert**

Trendell began working at BTBL in November 2009. He holds a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and has nearly completed a master's degree in the same field. Trendell's goal is to work with "at risk" youth. The most rewarding part of the job has been helping patrons, especially when he can refer them for other services offered by the Michigan Commission for the Blind. With the addition of assistive devices such as a large print keyboard, Zoom Text magnification software, a 27-inch computer monitor, and a 22-inch CCTV (closed circuit television), Trendell was able to take on multiple tasks. Those tasks include entering information from new applications into the BTBL database, sending books to patrons, and corresponding with Michigan Department of Corrections inmates who qualify for BTBL service.

## **Meagan Daniels**

Meagan began working at BTBL in January 2010. She holds a communication degree with a minor in general business. Meagan's goal is to be employed full-time in a customer service position. The most rewarding part of the job for her has been walking patrons through the steps to download books from BARD. Meagan's enthusiasm for technology is manifested in her ability to quickly learn and use cutting-edge assistive technology devices. Meagan uses both JAWS (Job Access With Speech) and Duxbury programs to accomplish daily tasks, which include converting and embossing text documents into Braille, assisting patrons over the phone, and authoring articles for the BTBL newsletter. Meagan also presented a workshop on downloading from BARD to over 30 participants at the recent Libraries Without Walls Conference.

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# Local Digital Production

## Digital Books

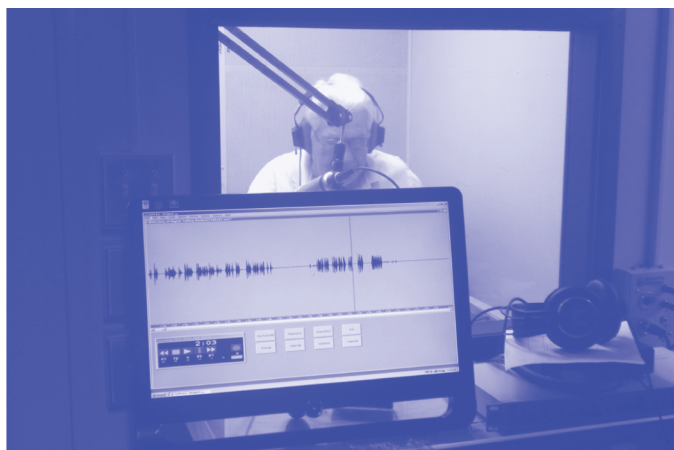
BTBL is pleased to announce the availability of our first locally recorded digital book: DBL 8262 *The Lost Tiki Palaces of Detroit*, by Michael Zadoorian, narrated by Keith Kurek. This book is a collection of stories of Detroit. It is a 2010 Michigan Notable Book. To request this title, call 1-800-992-9012.

## Michigan History Magazine

The January/February issue of *Michigan History Magazine* was sent to over 300 subscribers on digital cartridge during the second week of July. Late as it was, this issue represents a major turning point in our local narration program. We expect to close the gap between the magazine's print date and digital production with future issues.

As noted in the winter issue of this newsletter, narrator Richard Vogt is no longer available as "the voice" of *Michigan History*. The torch has been passed to Andy Andersen, narrator for the BTBL program for over 12 years, pictured below.

Patrons who canceled *Michigan History* on cassette may want to reactivate that subscription in the digital format. A cassette version will no longer be produced. Those who are currently subscribed to the cassette version need not call, as this change has been made automatically. Once read, returning the magazine cartridge and container by flipping over the mail card will assure that the next issue will be sent.



# Described DVD Movies

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The following described DVDs are now available for loan. Please note that DVD menus, which allow turning on the descriptive track, are not accessible without some vision. Call 1-800-992-9012 to request.

DV1	Basic Instinct; Michael Douglas
DV2	Abraham and Mary Lincoln: A House Divided; American Experience
DV100	2012; John Cusak
DV101	Couples Retreat; Vince Vaughn
DV102	District 9; Sharlito Copley
DV103	The Fourth Kind; Milla Jovovich
DV104	Hellboy II: The Golden Army; Ron Perlman
DV105	The Incredible Hulk; Edward Norton
DV106	It's Complicated: Meryl Streep
DV107	Julie and Julia; Meryl Streep
DV108	Land of the Lost; Will Ferrell
DV109	Leap Year; Amy Adams
DV110	Love Happens; Jennifer Aniston
DV111	The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor; Brendan Fraser
DV112	The Princess and the Frog; Disney Productions
DV113	Planet 51; Dwayne Johnson
DV114	Public Enemies; Johnny Depp
DV115	The Taking of Pelham 123; Denzel Washington
DV116	Toy Story; Disney Productions
DV117	Toy Story II; Disney Productions
DV118	The Ugly Truth; Gerard Butler
DV119	UP; Disney Productions
DV120	Wanted; Morgan Freeman
DV121	Zombieland; Jesse Eisenberg

**Described DVD movies are provided by the Library of Michigan Foundation with the support of patrons like you.**



# Library of Michigan Foundation

By making a gift to the Library of Michigan Foundation, donors can help the MCB Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL) better serve thousands of Michigan residents statewide who are visually impaired or have other disabilities. Donors may also opt to provide for the Library of Michigan Foundation in their wills. By doing so, donors are able to make a larger gift than what might be possible during their lifetime, become eligible to receive tax benefits, and enjoy recognition and thanks now for their planned charitable contributions later. To make a gift of support, please send a check to the Library of Michigan Foundation, P.O. Box 30159, Lansing, MI 48909, or contact Carolyn Sparks at (517) 373-1297.

The Library of Michigan Foundation is a non-profit organization which offers financial support to the MCB Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL) program.

If you would like to receive future mailings and information from the Library of Michigan Foundation, please sign below and return to:

Library of Michigan Foundation  
P.O. Box 30159  
Lansing, MI 48909



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MATTER  
FOR THE  
BLIND***

#### How to Reach the MCB Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL)

**By Phone:** 517-373-5614  
1-800-992-9012 (toll free)

**By Fax:** 517-373-5865  
1-800-726-7323 (toll free)

**By Mail:** 702 W. Kalamazoo St.  
P.O. Box 30007  
Lansing, MI 48909

**By E-Mail:** [BTBL@michigan.gov](mailto:BTBL@michigan.gov)

**On the Web:** [www.michigan.gov/btbl](http://www.michigan.gov/btbl)

**Online Catalog:** [www.michigan.gov/ordertalkingbooks](http://www.michigan.gov/ordertalkingbooks)

The In Focus Newsletter is made possible by your generous donations to the Library of Michigan Foundation. The Braille and Talking Book Library (BTBL); Michigan Commission for the Blind; Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA); is an equal opportunity employer/program. Alternative formats, auxiliary aids, services, and other reasonable accommodations are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.